

July 27, 2010

STATEWIDE CRIME STATISTICS RELEASED

BISMARCK – Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem today released North Dakota's crime statistics for 2009, which show that overall, the state's crime rate per capita decreased by 1.1% from 2008. The report is compiled from information reported by local law enforcement agencies across the state.

"The overall crime rate in North Dakota is still one of the lowest in the nation. The state continues to live up to its reputation as one of the nation's safest states, and that is good news," said Stenehjem. "The number of rapes has decreased, and that is further good news. As the report shows, however, there are areas of concern, including the continuing upward trend in violent crimes and especially aggravated assault," he continued.

Crime index offenses decreased by 0.2% with 12,822 offenses reported by local law enforcement, compared to 12,850 reported in 2008. Crime index offenses include the violent crimes of murder/non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, and property crimes such as burglary, theft, shoplifting, and motor vehicle theft. Violent crimes comprise 8.7% of the total index crimes reported in North Dakota, one of the lowest rates in the nation.

- Reports of violent crimes have increased by 62% in the past five years, from 690 in 2005 to 1,118 in 2009. During that same time, the state's population increased by 1.6%.
- Reports of aggravated assault increased by 7.7% last year, from 738 reports in 2008 to 795. By definition, aggravated assault involves serious bodily injury to the victim. The number of aggravated assaults reported in Devils Lake increased from 10 in 2008 to 28 in 2009, a 180% increase.
- The number of forcible rapes decreased by 7.2% from last year, from 222 in 2008 to 206 in 2009. Forcible rape involves violence or the threat of violence against a female victim.

Fifteen murders occurred in 2009. Although this is a significant statistical increase from 2008 (four murders), it comprises only 0.1% of crime index offenses. In 2007, there were 17 murders. In 2009, twelve victims died as a result of domestic violence. Four victims were under the age of 3 months. Firearms were involved in the deaths of six victims.

Property crime accounted for 91.3% of crime index offenses reported. The number of property crimes decreased by 0.9% in 2009, with 11,704 reported compared to 11,815 in 2008. Juveniles were arrested for 39.5% of the property crimes. Motor vehicle thefts decreased by 3.4%, from 854 in 2008 to 825 in 2009. More than \$11.7 million worth of property was reported stolen in 2009.

The state also tracks and reports drug and alcohol offenses, which are not crime index offenses. The number of arrests for all alcohol related offenses decreased by 1.2%, with 11,268 arrests in 2009 compared to 11,407 in 2008, but still accounts for almost 40% of total arrests in North Dakota. The number of DUI arrests was statistically unchanged, from 5,815 in 2008 to 5,819 in 2009. Although most age groups saw a decrease in the number of DUI arrests, this was offset by a 22% increase in arrests of individuals aged 50-59. DUI arrests still account for one-fourth (25.2%) of all adults arrested in 2008.

Juveniles accounted for 21.2% of total arrests and 35.9% of crime index offense arrests.

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Read the Crime Report at: <http://www.ag.nd.gov/Reports/BCIReports/CrimeHomicide/Crime09.pdf>

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